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SOLILOQUY ON THE APPROACH
OF DEATH

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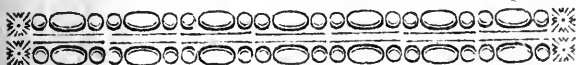
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ON THE
Approach of Death.

Exemplified in the CHARACTER of a
YOUNG LADY,
LATELY DECEAS'D.



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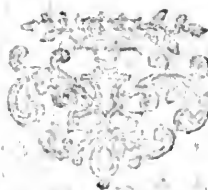
ON THE

Approach of Death

Exemplified in the Character of a

YOUNG LADY

LATELY DECEASED.



THE NEW YORK
Printed by J. W. H. and sold by him and the
Booksellers in New York and Albany.

NEW YORK



TO THE

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LADIES of Newcastle.

LADIES,



As the following *Soliloquy* on the *Approach of Death* is exemplified in the Character of a YOUNG LADY, lately deceas'd, whose Name will be rever'd to future Ages, for an Example and Pattern to her Sex, of every excellent Qualification, and noble Endowment, that e'er adorn'd a virtuous Mind, I make
free

free to think you will readily pardon the Boldness of dedicating it to You.

IF the Calmness and Serenity of Mind, express'd in this short Passage of her Life, with the perfect Resignation she shew'd thro' the Whole, to the Divine Will, can have any Influence with You to tread in her Steps, and be, like her, a Pattern and Example to your Sex, then will the End of communicating to the Publick this SOLILOQUY, be fully answer'd; from which I shall no longer detain you, than to subscribe myself,

LADIES,

Your Most Obedient,

Humble Servant.



A
S O L I L O Q U Y
O N T H E
A P P R O A C H O F D E A T H .



CERTAIN modern Author says, that *Resignation to the Will of God, is the Whole of Piety.* The following is an uncommon Instance of it, which I hope will not only serve as an Entertainment to some People, but likewise shew to what Pitch of Grandeur the human Mind is capable of being rais'd, and how

how incapable the greatest Terrors are to alarm a Mind, conscious of having liv'd agreeable to the Dictates of Reason.

Some Time ago, being employ'd in some Business in the Country, and oblig'd to lodge in a Country House, situate on a River's Side, which ran down through two Woods, the one on my Right-hand, and the other on my Left; the Prospect of the Place, at a Distance, gave me great Pleasure: So that, after I had alighted from my Horse, and for some Time rested with my Host, the clear Evening, the Sun shining bright, and Nature's Face swimming with Beauties, conspir'd to tempt me forth to view the flow'ry Lawn.

I wander'd along the River's Side, on a little Green that join'd itself to the Wood on my Right-hand, where the murmuring Sound of the Waters inspir'd my Mind with an awful Silence. The Birds perch'd on the Trees, congratulating each other's Happiness, and, with melodious Notes, joining in a general Chorus, to sing forth the Praises of that sovereign Beauty on whom they depend, and
who

who holds in Being the several Parts of this stupendous Frame, made me reflect on the Kindness of that God, who has fill'd the various Parts of Space with Creatures, and, with a liberal Hand, distributes such Degrees of Happiness to every Creature, as its imperfect Nature is capable to enjoy.

While I was walking along, musing in this Manner, I came insensibly to the Foot of the Green, where a little Brook fell from the Summit of the neighbouring Hills, and, after passing over several Rocks, here ran into the River, along whose Side I had walk'd. Here I stopp'd to see whence it came; but my Prospect was terminated, at some Distance from me, with a rocky Cliff on each Side of the Rivulet, from whence sprung Hasles, Oaks and Ashes, and form'd a regular Amphitheatre.

I march'd up, entertaining myself, in this remarkable Solitude, with the Musick of the Waters falling from one Rock to another, composing a Variety of agreeably sounding Cascades; when, to my great Surprize! I was struck with a deep Groan, as if from a

B

Female

Female Heart, which to me seem'd to proceed from a Number of Trees that grew at the Side of a little Plain, and form'd themselves into a small Grotto.

Here I stopp'd to hear if perchance some Nymph of the Plain had retir'd to this Place, to lament, in mournful Lays, the Loss of her absent Lover. I heard the Sound redoubled; upon which I advanced nearer, till, at last, I came to the Back of a blooming Thorn, through which I look'd, and beheld a tall young Woman, stately and majestick: Her Dress was simple, and yet seem'd somewhat above the Vulgar; the Features of her Face were meagre and wan, as if spoil'd by Sickness and Distress, and, as I afterwards understood, she was thought by herself, and every one else that saw her, as upon the Verge of Life, and Confines of Eternity.

I stood, being unperceiv'd by her, and saw her arise, with an Air that shew'd the Frailty of her Body. She came forth from the Thicker to the little Plain; and, after she had walk'd along for some time, with

a Chearfulness in her Countenance that did not seem common to one in her Condition, she smil'd, stretch'd forth her Arm, and, lifting up her Eyes to Heaven, thus began.

O my Mind! why should thou be discouraged with the Thoughts of my approaching Diffolution? — While I am clogg'd with Organs of Sense, these do continually hinder me from making those Tours to the Celestial Regions, and from having such Views of Things, as Beings of a nobler Order continually enjoy.

While I am in the World, Organs of Sense are absolutely necessary, as Instruments to produce those Effects, on dead and inactive Matter, that my Situation here below requires: But rejoice, O my Mind! that, in a little Time, thou shalt be no more troubled with such a Machine; — thou shalt be convey'd to a World of Spirits, in which thou shalt have no Use for a Tongue to convey thy Thoughts, but shalt speak the Language of Seraphs.

— These wrinkled Hands shall drop into their Parent Dust ; — those Legs that now carry my almost lifeless Corpse, shall be supplied with a Vehicle of Light, in which thou shalt ride along with yonder declining Sun, and clearly see the Effects he produces on every single Plant and Vegetable.

Can it give me Pain, that I am so soon to be cut off the Theatre of the World, and that my Appearance here below has been so short ? — Did not I see yonder Herbs, Yesterday, opening their Buds, and disclosing their Blossoms ; beautifying the Earth, and gracing this Solitude ? And lo ! To-day, they are cut down ; they lie whither'd and decay'd. — Let me rather be glad, that I am so soon to be dismiss'd from a World in which such a Number of false Pleasures are continually courting the Senses, and apt to captivate the best of Mortals.

I must bid adieu to my Friends and Acquaintances, who have sympathiz'd with me in my Trouble, and borne almost the Half
of

of my Distress; but this shall give me no Pain, since I am persuaded, that the Existence of a rational Being is not terminated by the scanty Period of human Life: For tho', in a few Days, my Body shall be laid into the Bosom of the Earth, and become an Entertainment for the Worms, yet the Day will come, when it shall arise in blooming Beauty, and enjoy a noble Repast of Love and Friendship with those of my Acquaintance who have gone before me, and those who must quickly follow.

Shall the dismal Gloom of that dark Vale through which I am to pass, alarm my Mind? No, sure. My Conscience informs me, I have spent a Life agreeable to the Laws of Nature. I have nothing to fear from within, for my tender Years are yet unsullied by the infatuating Pleasures of Sense. Though my Constitution has been weak and tender from the Day of my Birth, yet I have not repin'd, being persuaded, that infinite Power, directed by infinite Wisdom and Goodness, must produce what is best upon the Whole.

— Ye

— Ye Rocks! — ye Woods! I can call you to witness, that, instead of murmuring at my unhappy Condition in the World, I have frequently retir'd to your Shade, and here have sung, in rapturous Song, the Praises of your Maker.

In a little Time I shall be transported, [*Here stretching forth her Hand to the Sky*] by winged Seraphs, to yonder Celestial Abodes. — I shall be welcom'd, by the Musick of the Heavenly Choir, to those happy Abodes, where Sorrow and Pain are ever banish'd. — There shall I be a Companion for virtuous Minds, and shall tune a Golden Harp, to sing Anthems of Praise to the Fountain of Light, and Source of Joy.

No more shall I be at a Loss to observe the Plan of Providence: — For though, to my present View of Things,

*The Ways of Heaven are dark and intricate,
Puzzled in Mazes, and perplex'd in Errors,*

Yet,

Yet, in a few Days, I hope to see them unfolded in Beauty and Regularity;—and that dark Face of Things, which has so frequently puzzl'd my narrow Capacity, shall be display'd in Order and Proportion.

Whilst I am here, and see only the Outlines of Creation, like a Fly on a vaulted Roof, I am apt to cavil, and take Exceptions; but then shall I see Worlds within Worlds, teeming with new Beauties, and every one of them enjoying the greatest Happiness.

— I shall clearly see the Gradation of Beings, and the Dependence that one Creature has upon another; and having a View of the whole Scheme, shall see Objects truly worthy the Contemplation of a reasonable Being.

— Then shall I be capable to trace the Orbits of the Planets; — then shall I know what unforeseen Force controuls their rapid Motions, and keeps them in their Courses.

I shall

I shall know the Habits and Dispositions of the Inhabitants of those Stars that shine with a tapering Light when the Sun dips his winged Steeds in the Western Ocean.

Why then shall my Nature recoil at the Thoughts of Immortality? — The Blow in a Moment will be struck, and I shall be free from Misery and Pain. — Therefore, Thanks be to that God, who, by his invisible Hand, has lead me through the slippery Paths of Life. — Though I have been guilty of Faults, yet the Goodness of that Being, who knows the secret Springs and Movements of the Human Mind, will determine him to make Allowances for the Frailty and Imperfections of Human Nature.

Therefore rejoice, O my Mind! that, in a little Time, thou art to be removed from a State of Probation, — from a World, in which thou can'st, at best, but enjoy Freedom from Pain, — and art to lift up thy Face amidst innumerable Companies of Angels and Holy Spirits, and shalt live for
Millions

Millions of Ages, even for Eternity, under the Tuition of that Being who looks down with a Smile on the various Orders of Beings he has created.

But now must I leave the lovely Theme, for I find the decay'd Machine of this Body demanding Nature's Rest.——

[Here beck'ning with her Hand to the Woods and circumambient Rocks, she said,]

Adieu, ye Woods!——ye Rocks!——that have been my Temple, in which I have fung my Maker's Praise. Adieu, ye feather'd Flock, that dwell on the Boughs of Trees, who have join'd with me in Concert. I shall perhaps never see you more, but I hope to be admitted into a nobler Society.

[Here she went away.]

I was struck with the deepest Surprize, to see a young Damsel comforting herself, in this Manner, upon the Prospect of her Departure from this World, and behaving with so much Resignation in her Distress, which appear'd now and then in her Countenance.

C

I stood.

I stood mute, till I saw her go out of the End of the Lane, imagining with myself, that I had heard a *Socrates*, or a *Cyrus*, discoursing to their Friends, some Hours before their Death, on the Immortality of the Soul. I mourn'd to think that a Person who seem'd to have so strong a Sense of Virtue and Goodness, should so soon be call'd into another World, but comforted myself with *Horace's* Advice to *Virgil*, when he was lamenting the Death of *Quintillus*, *Lib. I. Ode XXIV.*

*Tu frustra pius, heu, non ita creditum,
Possis Quintillium Deos.*

After I came to my Lodgings, I understood she was a neighbouring Gentleman's Daughter, remarkable for her Piety and Goodness, even from her Infancy; that she had been always tender, and was then more so than ever, and expected to be near the End of her Days.

The Singularity of the Case, the heroick Spirit she seem'd to be endow'd with, and the perfect Resignation she shew'd to the Will of Heaven, engag'd me to publish the above Account, not only to shew, that a
Mind,

Mind, conscious of Virtue and Goodness, can face any Danger, and endure any worldly Misery; but likewise to convince the World, that in these Northern Parts of *Britain* we can boast of a Set of Females worthy of Love and Esteem, whose Beauties not only consist in a fine Shape, agreeable Features, and charming Complexions, but also in the nobler Graces of the Mind, Virtue, Modesty and Goodness.



On



On the DEATH of a
YOUNG LADY.

I.

HARK! She bids all her Friends adieu;
Some Angel calls her to the Spheres;
Our Eyes the radiant Saint pursue
Thro' liquid Telescopes of Tears.

II.

Farewel, bright Soul! a short Farewel,
Till we shall meet again above,
In the sweet Grove, where Pleasures dwell,
And Trees of Life bear Fruits of Love.

III.

There Glory sits on every Face,
There Friendship smiles in every Eye,
There shall our Tongues relate the Grace
That led us homeward to the Sky.

IV. O'er

IV.

O'er all the Names of CHRIST, our King,
Shall our harmonious Voices rove;
Our Harps shall sound from every String
The Wonders of his bleeding Love.

V.

Come, Sovereign LORD, dear SAVIOUR, come,
Remove these separating Days,
Send thy bright Wheels to fetch us home;
That golden Hour, how long it stays!

VI.

How long must we lie lingering here,
While Saints around us take their Flight?
Smiling they quit this dusky Sphere,
And mount the Hills of heavenly Light.

VII.

Sweet Soul! we leave thee to thy Rest,
Enjoy thy JESUS and thy GOD,
Till we, from Bands of Clay releas'd,
Spring out, and climb the shining Road.

VIII.

While the dear Dust she leaves behind,
Sleeps in thy Bosom, sacred Tomb!
Soft be her Bed, her Slumbers kind,
And all her Dreams of Joy to come.



O N
DEATH and ETERNITY.

I.
MY Thoughts, that often mount the Skies,
Go, search the World beneath,
Where Nature in all Ruin lies,
And owns her Sovereign, Death.

II.
The Tyrant, how he triumphs here!
His Trophies spread around!
And Heaps of Dust and Bones appear
Thro' all the hollow Ground.

III.
These Skulls, what ghastly Figures now!
How loathsome to the Eyes?
These are the Heads we lately knew
So beauteous, and so wise.

IV.
But where the Souls, those deathless Things,
That left this dying Clay?
My Thoughts, now stretch out all your Wings,
And trace Eternity.

V. O that

V.

O that unfathomable Sea!
Those Deeps without a Shore!
Where living Waters gently play,
Or fiery Billows roar.

VI.

Thus must we leave the Banks of Life,
And try this doubtful Sea;
Vain are our Groans, and dying Strife,
To gain a Moment's Stay.

VII.

There we shall swim in heav'nly Bliss,
Or sink in flaming Waves,
While the pale Carcass thoughtless lies,
Amongst the silent Graves.

VIII.

Some hearty Friend shall drop his Tear
On our dry Bones, and say,
" These once were strong, as mine appear,
" And mine must be as they."

IX.

Thus shall our mould'ring Members teach
What now our Senses learn:
For Dust and Ashes loudest preach
Man's infinite Concern.

F I N I S.

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